

## A TRIBUTE TO A TRUE LASER PIONEER: THE LATE PROFESSOR ISAAC KAPLAN

Toshio Ohshiro

Dear Readers, with this issue of the journal we sadly mark the passing of one of the true laser pioneers, even more sad because he was an active and founding member of both the ISLSM and WFSLMS, right up to the last meetings and a regular contributor to *Laser Therapy*. I am of course referring to Professor Isaac Kaplan, who died after a short illness on July 14<sup>th</sup> this year. Please read his Obituary elsewhere in this issue. However, I wanted to say a few personal words too, as Professor Kaplan was more than a true friend, he was one of my most respected mentors, and the father of our international laser family with his wife, Masha, as our mother, going all the way back to the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ISLSM, *Laser Tokyo 81*. That is 33 years ago, but I can remember with clarity Isaac and Masha at that meeting, and you know, they have not changed much in that 33 years, except for the devastating fact that Isaac is no longer with us. Despite his tremendous standing in the laser community, he remained a man of the people, not at all conceited, but simple and very straightforward. If you ever said something he considered foolish, he could be too straightforward! But that was one of his charms: he always spoke straight from the heart. It is very hard for me personally to think that we will not see him at the forthcoming APALMS at the end of November in Taiwan, tall and almost as ramrod straight as always despite being in his 93<sup>rd</sup> year. We were looking forward very much to meeting up, and now that cannot happen. If you want to see and hear Professor Kaplan one more time, not in rhyme but in serious, pensive mode, please visit YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULTncCwulpM>) and watch him address the Laser Tokyo 2009 joint meeting of the ISLSM, JSLSM and WFSLMS. The clip is sadly cut a little short, but it will remind you of the man and his contribution to the laser world, and to us all.

As you know, 'Kaplan's Corner' was inaugurated as a regular feature by the journal to help celebrate the poetic gift which came to Isaac comparatively late in life. But true to his form, Prof Kaplan did not concentrate on flowers or trees or the sea or true love: he

mostly wrote about the use of the CO<sub>2</sub> laser, and in these poems there are some real educational gems as to the true extent of what the CO<sub>2</sub> laser can be used for, and indeed what Isaac used it for, both by himself and in cooperation with other specialties. We also published his welcome remarks to various society meetings, all delivered in rhyming couplets. We plan to continue to include Kaplan's Corner in the journal as a memorial to Isaac's memory, as we have a few poems still in stock. Furthermore, just as we did for Dr Billie Aronoff, we want to create a series of memorial pages for Prof Kaplan, also published in Kaplan's Corner, so please send us your memories, your pictures and your tributes and whatever you think appropriate to help celebrate the life of this great man. Please send them by email to [lasertherapy@jml.com](mailto:lasertherapy@jml.com), by post to me at Japan Medical Laser Laboratory, Shinsei Kaikan 4th Floor, 32-2 Shinanomachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan 160-0016 or by FAX to +81-3-5269-1410. This is not to mourn his passing, although of course it is quite right that we do this, but to help us remember how he was in life: a man with sparkling wit, genuine humor (that could occasionally be a bit acerbic!), tremendous intellect and great humility. Thank you in advance for your tributes and memories. We will be publishing the in installments, so please keep sending them in.

### **Laser Safety**

In past issues of the journal as part of our commitment to the safe and effective use of the laser across all specialties, we have published translations of the 12 official Laser Safety Guidelines from the Japan Society for Laser Surgery and Medicine. For full details of the authors and their affiliations, please use the *Laser Therapy* on J-STAGE search facility at <https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/islsm/>. In fact, this is an exciting search facility as you can now search all the way back to Volume 4 by author, title or key word. We are planning a series of articles in future issues on the history and practical application of laser safety in the operating and treatment room, authored by leading

experts in the field including Professor David Sliney, so please keep an eye open for the first of these articles, coming soon.

## Indexing *Laser Therapy* on PubMed

We are now in the absolute final stages of getting *Laser Therapy* accepted for indexing in PubMed, the free database accessing primarily the MEDLINE database of references and abstracts on life sciences and biomedical topics, and the first source for researchers looking for articles on particular subjects or by certain authors. PubMed is part of the Entrez information retrieval system maintained by the United States National Library of Medicine (NLM) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and also includes all *Index Medicus* entries from 1951. When we got *Laser Therapy* onto the J-STAGE database, that was a big step forward towards raising the impact factor of the journal, and being on PubMed will be an even bigger step. Getting the journal into PubMed's index is not just a matter of the quality of the journal: if that had been the case we would already have been indexed. The data from each paper have to be presented in a certain way, and in a special language called XML (eXtensible Markup Language): this allows all systems who use XML to index separate items from each article automatically, such as journal volume and issue with date and page numbers, title, author, key word and full abstract text. Researchers can then search PubMed online for any one of these items, and see all articles which are relevant. By adding limiters, such as restricting the search to the title and abstract, author, or the date of publication, very precise searches can be performed. Our problem has been in getting the XML coding perfectly correct, and now we have submitted our final revisions. Hopefully by the next issue of the journal, we'll be in PubMed. Watch this space

## 2012 Best Paper Award

Let me remind you that the *Laser Therapy* **Good Paper Awards** are being offered again for this volume of the journal, so you only have one more issue to go to submit your paper to be in for a chance at winning one of the awards. The prizes are JPY ¥1,000,000

(approximately USD \$12,700 at current rates of exchange) for the Best Paper and the two Good Papers will each be awarded JPY ¥300,000 (around US \$3,800). The judging is by a large panel of international experts in the field, and all you need to do to enter is submit a paper which is accepted for publication in Volume 21, so get writing. For full details on how to submit a paper to the journal, please see the 'Notes for Contributors' in all issues of the journal, or online at <http://www.jmll.co.jp/lasertherapy/notes/notes.html>, where you can also find full guidelines and an template in WORD format to help you put your paper together. As they say, "You've got to be in it to win it!"

## End Notes

First off, please remember that the 14<sup>th</sup> APALMS meeting is being held in Taipei, Taiwan, at the end of November. This will be an outstanding meeting in the Taipei International Convention Center. Please see the meeting website (<http://www.apalms2012.tw/index.html>) for what the Organizing Committee under the leadership of meeting president Professor Cheng-Jen Chang has in store for you. Also remember that the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Laser Licensing System (ILLiS) initiative will also be held prior to the congress on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. This represents an opportunity to be accredited with an ISLSM/WFSLMS approved diploma in one of the ILLiS categories. For full details and how to apply for a place, please visit <http://www.apalms2012.tw/ILLiS.html>.

That's it for this Editorial, and although it is one of the saddest editorials I have ever had to write because of the passing of our friend and mentor, Professor Isaac Kaplan, let us take the opportunity to remember him as he would wish to be remembered. Read his Obituary, and send in your memories for his Memorial Pages. We are fast approaching autumn in the northern hemisphere at least, although here in Japan the hot days of summer seem to want to continue although it is getting a little cooler in the evenings, and the nights are starting to draw in a little. Use these longer evenings to write an article for the journal, and thereby automatically enter our 2012 Best Paper Awards competition!

Tokyo, September 2012.